

Testimony given: Wednesday, March 20, 2019

By: Patricia J. Moio, CCMC, CCMO
Tax Collector, Town of Redding, CT

Mr. Chairman, esteemed members of the Planning and Development Committee, I am here in opposition to Bill 7192, eliminating elected tax collectors. Thank you for taking the time to hear from members of the Connecticut Tax Collector's Association, elected members.

My name is Patricia Moio (written on the list to testify as Moio). I am an elected Tax Collector for the Town of Redding, Connecticut, population approximately 9,400.

Before I begin, I would like to ask you to please not judge tax collectors as in Colchester. Colchester had its own unique situation. There is good and bad in every profession. We cannot be judged by one bad one.

I have been elected since November, 1979, almost 40 years ago, maybe longer than some in this room are old. I take great pride in serving Redding. I, as my colleagues, have a passion and deep commitment to public service. I've served as President of both the Connecticut Tax Collector's Association and the Northeast Regional Tax Collectors and Treasurers Association. Currently, I am CoPresident of the Fairfield County Tax Collectors Association. I am a member of OPM's Certification Committee and for many years had been an instructor for three of the four courses required to become a Certified Collector. I am an Elected, Professional, Tax Collector.

I am motivated by learning, sharing skills and promoting professionalism. Being elected allows me to balance my personal life and my professional life. Maybe you are able to enjoy that same privilege, at times, as elected officials. I certainly hope so.

Being elected allows us to create department policy and challenges us to find innovative solutions to not only department issues, but for our taxpayers as well.

By taking elected status away, you minimize our leadership roles.

Think for a second about some of your friends or relatives at home and their attitude toward their employment. Do they have the grit and determination that you have as an elected official?

Do they have that fire to do more for others and know they make a difference in so many lives, just as you do as an elected official?

If you're honest, you know they don't. Being elected is a calling. You have it or you don't. It allows taxpayers to look at how you live your life. Are you the person they want to fight or work for them? We, as elected Tax Collectors, feel the same way! We want to make a difference for our municipalities. Allow us to continue to do that.

By implementing this bill and removing elected collectors, you tell residents, taxpayers and voters of Connecticut that their voice does not matter.

I am concerned about the big picture here. You want to remove elected Tax Collectors, why? Does it save the State money?? Does it make people want to move to Connecticut?? What purpose does it serve?? The answer is NONE. Unless of course, it's the beginning of removing positions that are in your way. I heard from an elected official in New Hampshire who went through something similar. He said, the first year, one elected position was removed. The next year, fourteen elected positions were removed. Where are we going with this?

Part of the language of your bill is that we, as elected, are not professional. You are all elected. Are you professional?? Of course you are!! Were you professional legislators before you were elected?? Did you have specific qualifications or training? Perhaps a Legislator's School?? No, but you, like us, want to do a professional, public service job. We, like you, do our jobs with great pride and integrity.

Fix something in Connecticut that is broken. It definitely is not the elected tax collecting profession. Vote NO for taking the voice away from the people of Connecticut.

Allow Home Rule to do its' job. Allow municipalities their own form of government and operate as their charters direct. Vote against this bill to remove elected tax collectors.

Do you really want to do something beneficial? Give the tax collectors more work. Give us motor vehicle registrations to do. Elected collectors are eager to help solve Connecticut's problems. We want to work with you. Please don't vote against us.

Elected professionals keep elected professionals elected.

Thank you for listening to us today. Thank you for your time and commitment to the residents of Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,

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